

**BOARD OF EDUCATION****Use of Internet and Social Networks and  
Other Forms of Communication**General Guidelines

Consult district's policy on internet safety and appropriate use, as well as the employee manual and/or parent and student handbook. Be aware that all existing policies and behavior guidelines extend to school-related activities in the online environment as well as on school premises.

Use good judgment. Think about the type of image you want to convey on behalf of the district when you are posting to social networks and social media sites. Remember that what you post will be viewed and permanently archived. Social media websites and blogs are not private. Internet search engines can find information years after it was originally posted. Comments can be forwarded or copied, and archival systems save information even if a post is deleted.

Remember professional communications are available to school administrators. The district considers an employee's use of any electronic media for the purpose of communicating with a student or a parent to be an extension of the employee's workplace responsibilities. Accordingly, the board expects school personnel to use professional judgment and appropriate decorum when using any social media in this fashion. School district administrators may require an employee to provide access to any websites used by him or her for communication with students or parents and to produce copies of any electronic communication with students or parents, including text messages, web page posts, etc. This policy does not authorize an administrator to inspect an employee's personal equipment without the employee's express consent.

Social Networking Websites

Many social networking websites are not accessible on the district's network because they have been blocked. If school personnel, including teachers, would like to request that a website be made accessible to use for teaching and learning, that person shall submit a written request to the IT Director for review, identifying the online tools to be used and the instructional purpose in using them.

While on school property, neither school personnel nor students may use an outside, proprietary network to access websites that are blocked on the district's network.

Personnel shall abide by the following requirements regarding use of social networking websites, even when done in their personal time, using personal property.

1. Fraternization with students using social networking websites on the internet:
  - a. School personnel may not list students as "friends" on networking sites; (exceptions may be made by administration for related parties).

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- b. All e-contact by sponsors with student organization members shall be sent to all team members;
  - c. Inappropriate contact with students or parents via e-mail, phone, or other devices is prohibited.
- 2. Employees may not post items on social networking websites with sexual content if they are identifying themselves as an employee of the district;
- 3. Employees may not post items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs or alcohol if they are identifying themselves as an employee of the district;
- 4. Employees may not post pictures, video, or audio of students unless the student's parent (if the student is under 18) or the student (if the student is 18 or over) has provided the student's building administrator with written permission to do so.

Note that when using a school district e-mail address and/or equipment to participate in any social media or professional social networking activity, the communications are public, and employees are responsible for the content in the communication.

Copyright and Fair Use Guidelines

District personnel and students must respect copyright and fair use guidelines when posting material on social network sites, even those websites used and accessed for educational and classroom purposes. See [www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html](http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html).

Hyperlinking to outside sources is recommended. Do not plagiarize. Give credit, where credit is due, to the sources of material. When hyperlinking to other sites and media, be sure that the hyperlinked content is appropriate and consistent with these guidelines. Be aware that photographs taken by professional photographers cannot be scanned and used on the internet without the photographer's permission, even if they are photos purchased from the photographer.

Text and Instant Messaging

District personnel shall not text or instant message any student individually. All text and instant messages to students shall be sent to the school, class, team, club or organization. Staff shall not send messages that are personal in nature and not related to the business of the school or that contain confidential information to persons not authorized to receive that information.

Use of Social Media

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The Superintendent shall designate those staff persons who have management or administrator access to the district's social media, including, but not limited to the ability to remove content from the school's social media if determined to be inappropriate. Only content that is allowable on the school's website is allowable on the school's social media pages unless otherwise authorized by the Superintendent.

Penalties

Both district personnel and students face the possibility of penalties, including student suspension and employee termination, for failing to abide by district policies when accessing and using social media.

Adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2011.